

Investigating Design Standards on CD-ROM's

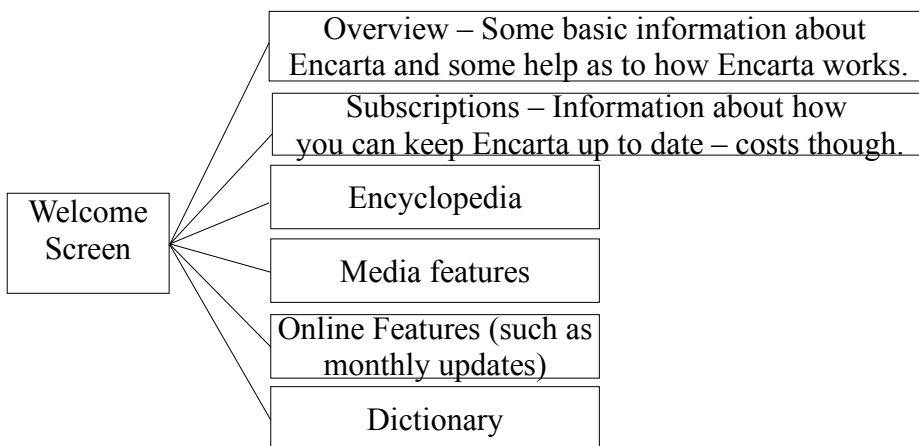
1a. Chosen CD-ROM's

- Microsoft's Encarta 97 Encyclopedia.
- Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia 99.
- Body Works 5, produced by Softkey Multimedia Inc. (This program allows you to explore the anatomy of the human body in a 3D environment.)

1b. CD-ROM Structure

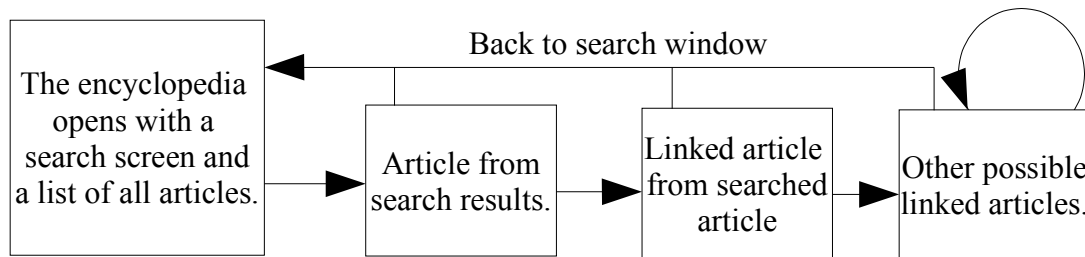
Encarta 97

Fig 1.1 Entrance structure.



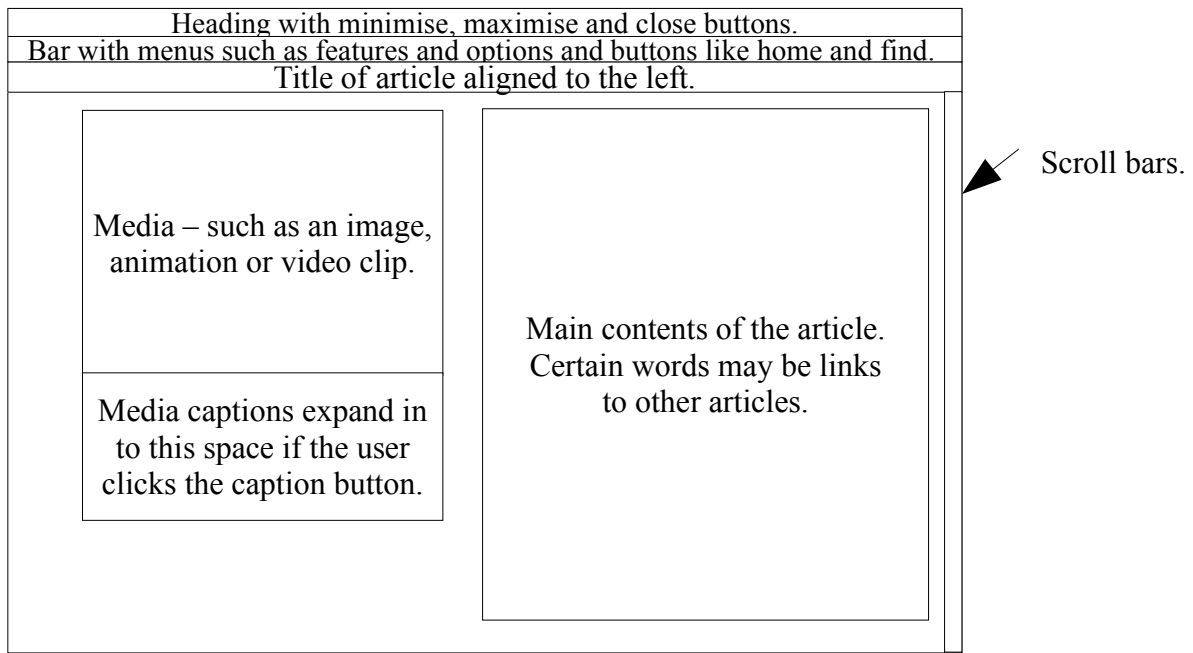
This first screen gives a hierarchical structure however once you move off this screen each area uses web structures.

Fig 1.2 Article search facility.



This shows a web-type navigation structure as items are linked in a circular fashion. Features to speed up searching are always available in the menu along the top.

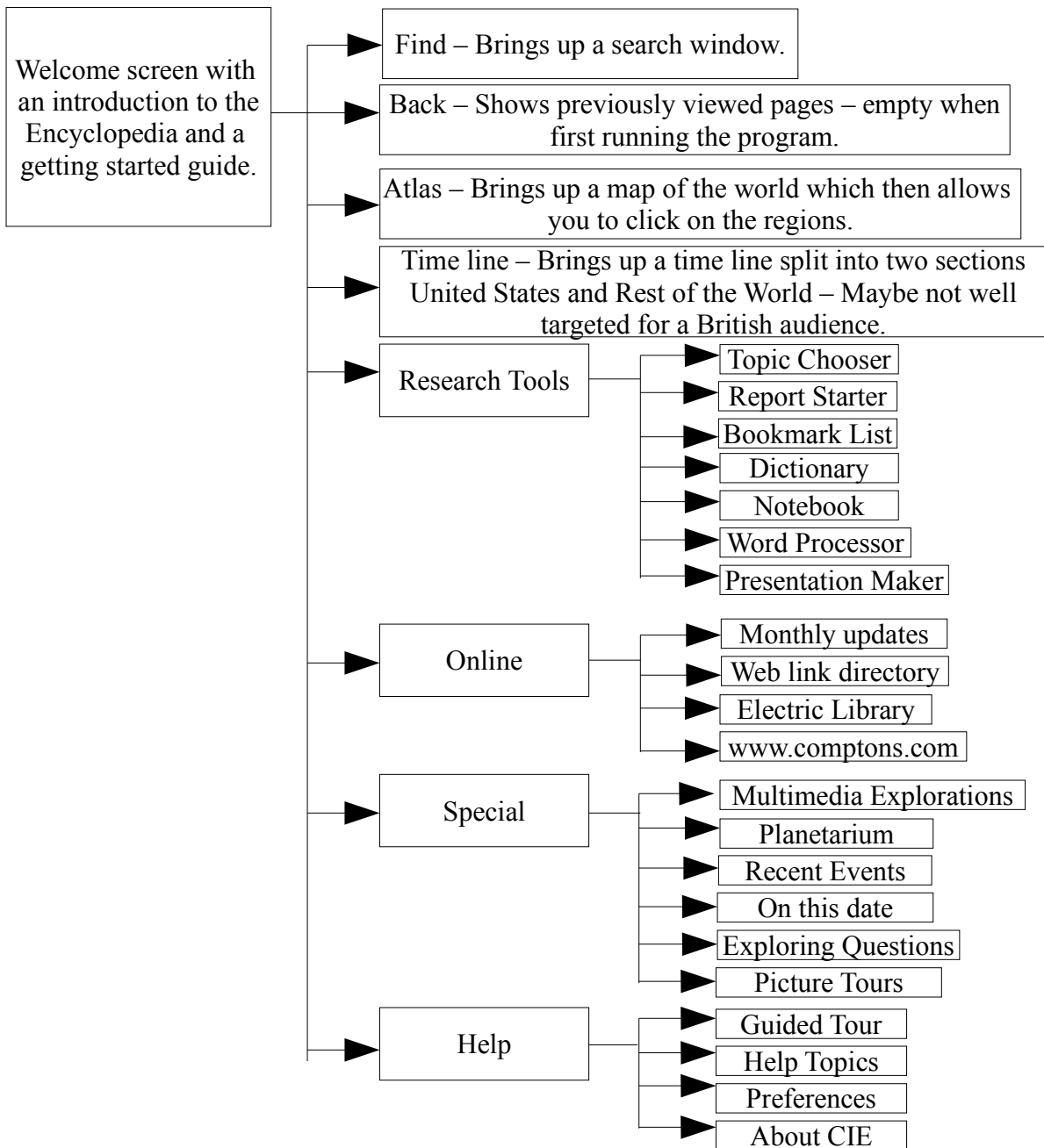
Fig 1.3 Content structure.



Identical layout structure for all pages. The other sections such as atlas and time line are links to articles. They are structured similarly to the main search facility (fig 1.2).

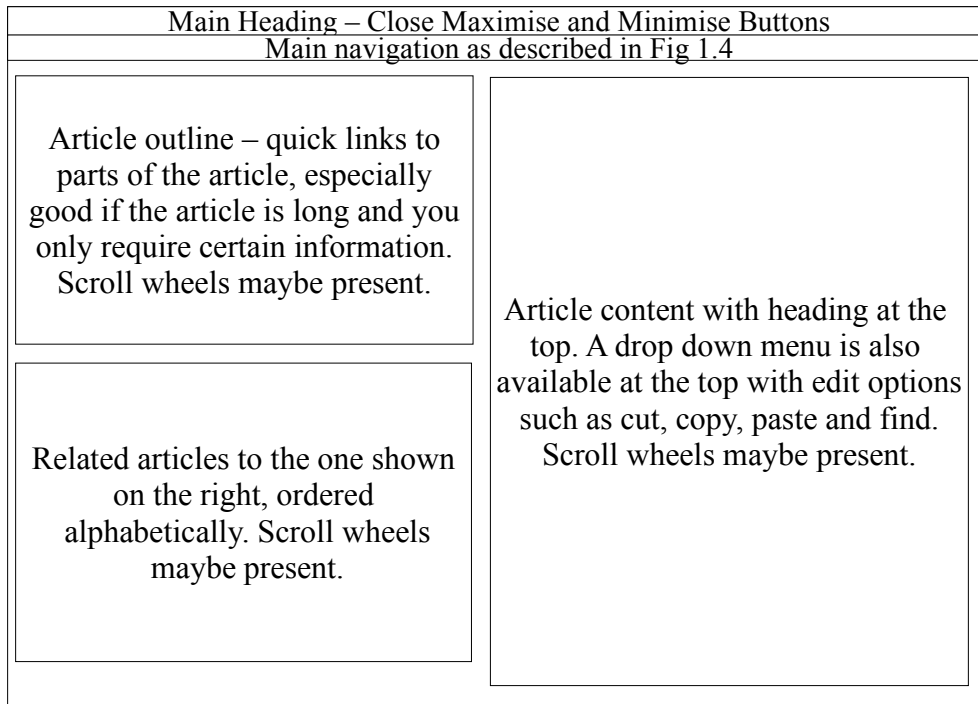
Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia 99

Fig 1.4 Entrance structure.



A hierarchical structure is used for the Compton's encyclopedia some of the menu buttons bring up a drop down menu while some go straight to another page or window, it is not clear which do what. The main menu is constant on all parts of the encyclopaedia and can be found at the top. Each menu has a separate sound associated with it, fortunately this can be turned off in the settings.

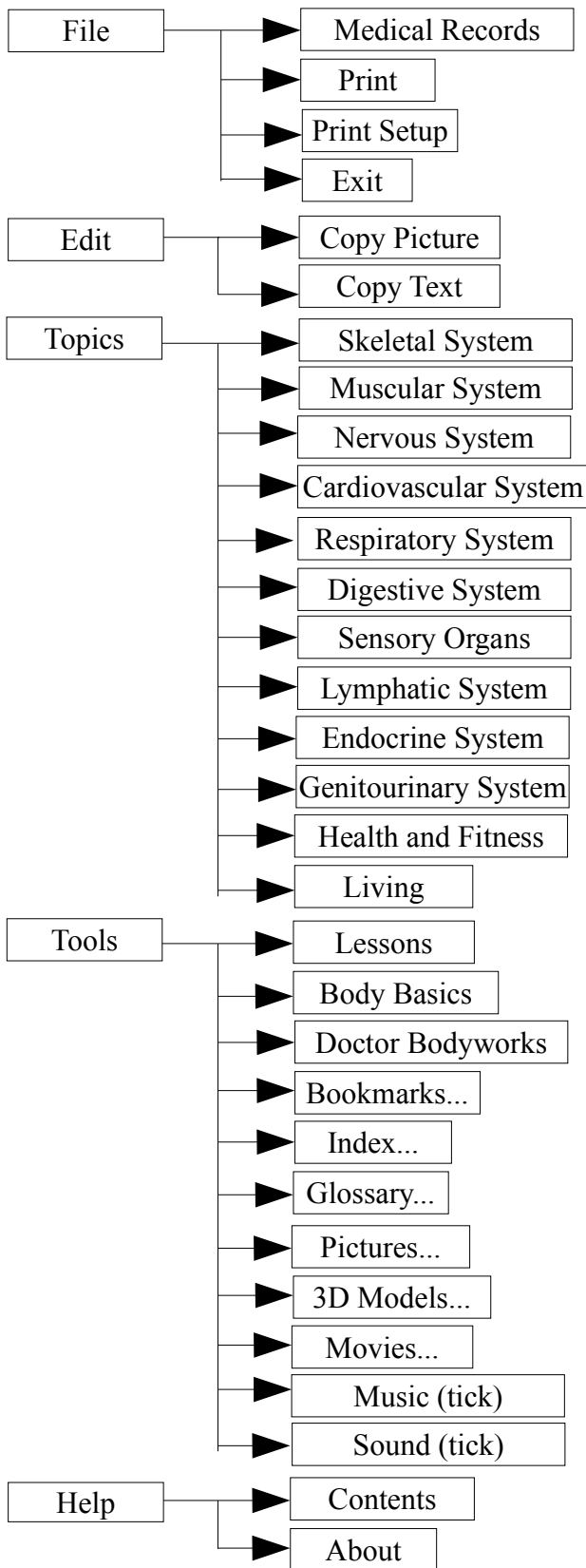
Fig 1.5 Content Structure.



This displays a web-type structure as there are many ways to get between articles and each new article brings up a different set of related articles.

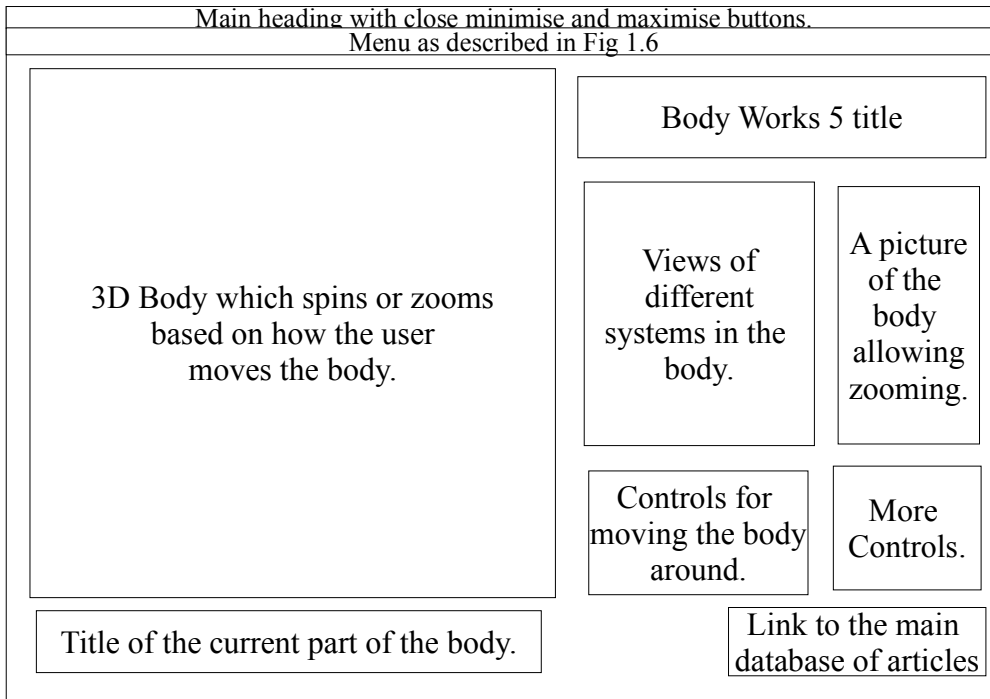
Body Works 5

Fig 1.6 Menu structure.



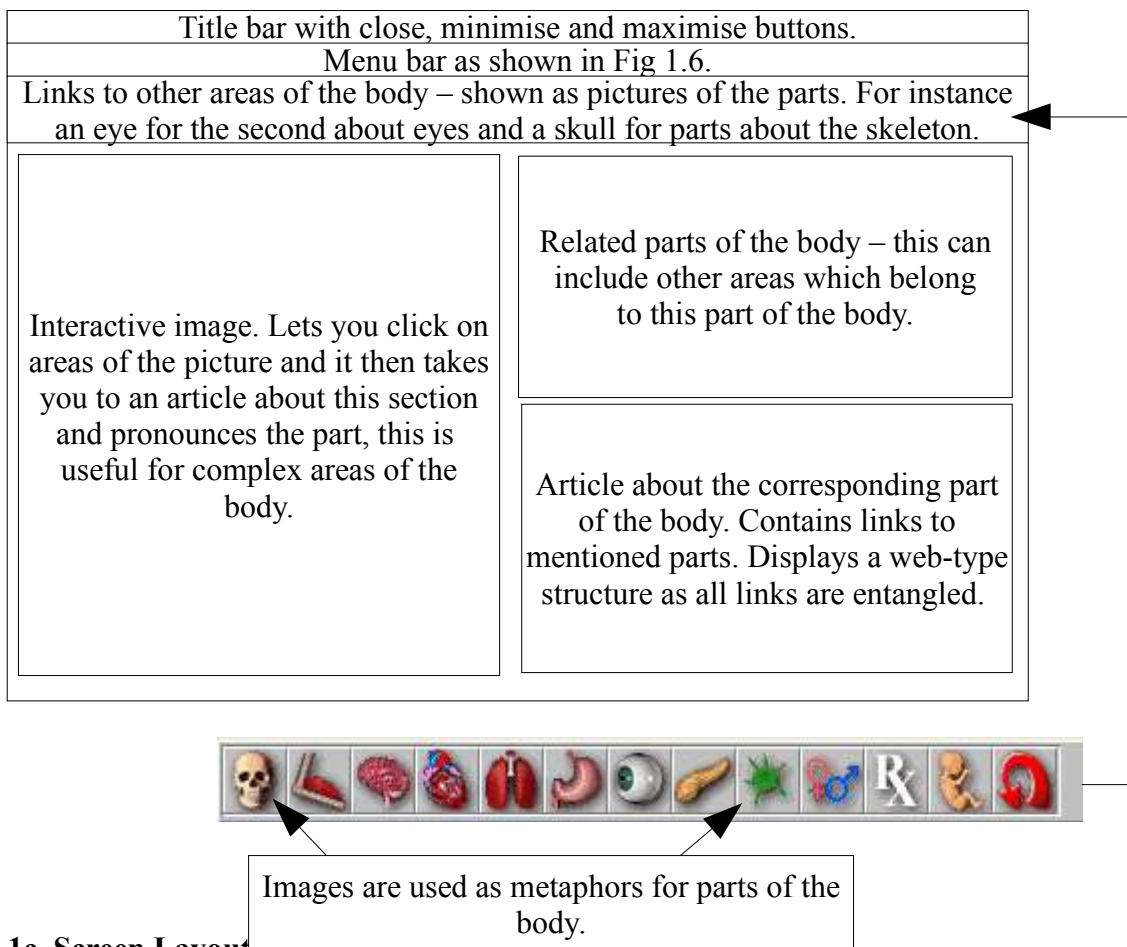
The menu uses a hierarchical structure and is displayed at the top of the program at all times giving the user easy navigation between all the main areas of the program.

Fig 1.7 Entrance screen structure.



The navigation for this page is very complex as each control or link on the page does something completely different. For instance the controls for the body move the 3D body while the link to the database takes you to an entire different screen.

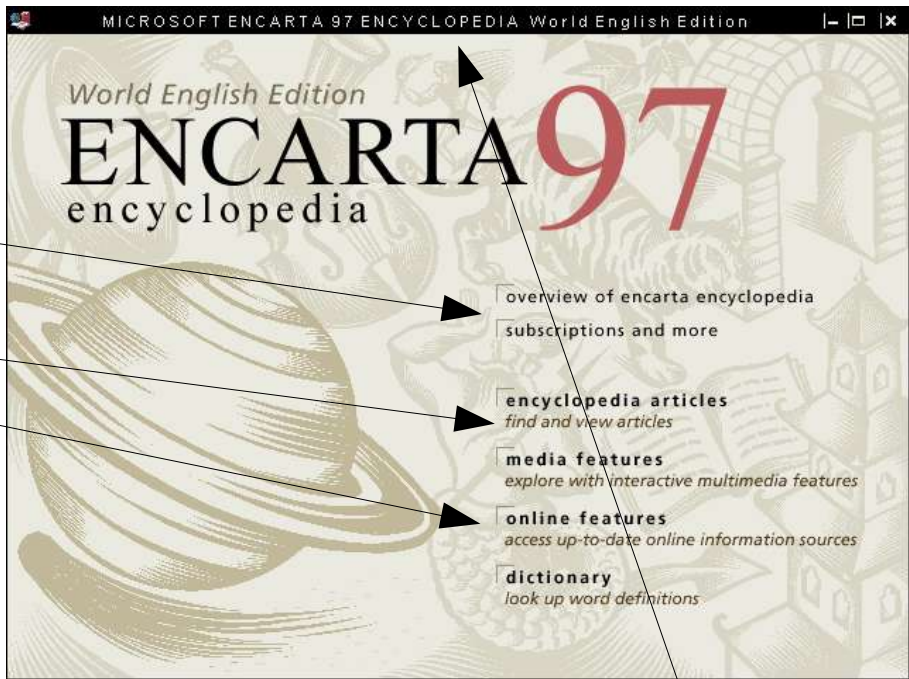
Fig 1.8 Body parts database screen structure.



1c. Screen Layout

Encarta 97

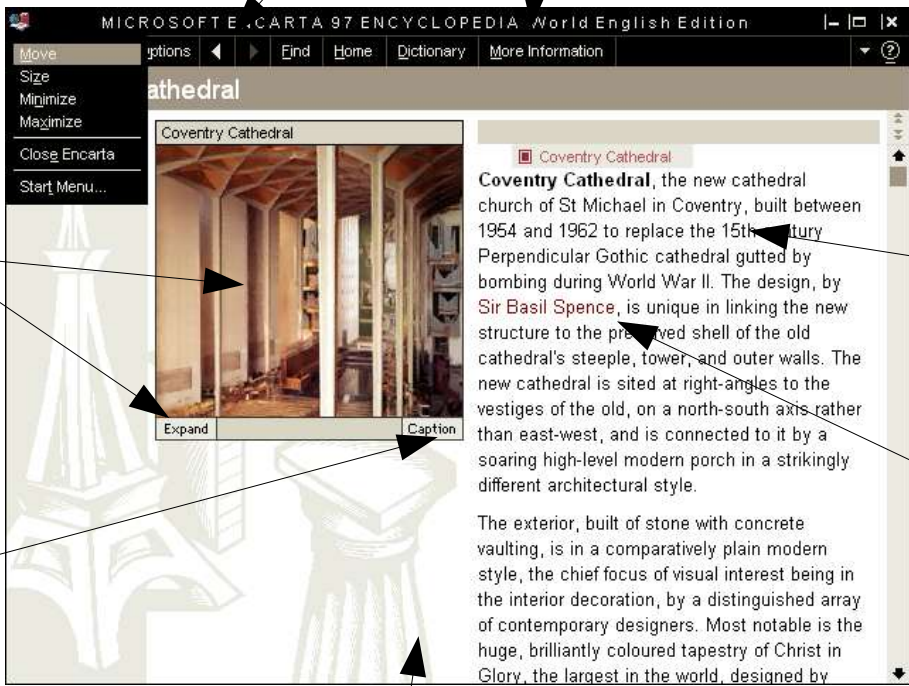
Links as shown in Fig 1.1. Text links are used maybe because it would be hard to represent graphically



Navigation to useful time cutting sections such as Find and Home. Note how these are not shown on the opening screen. The other two packages display these links or menus on all screen.

Media, in this case an image. It can be enlarged.

Caption box opens below if the user wants more information.

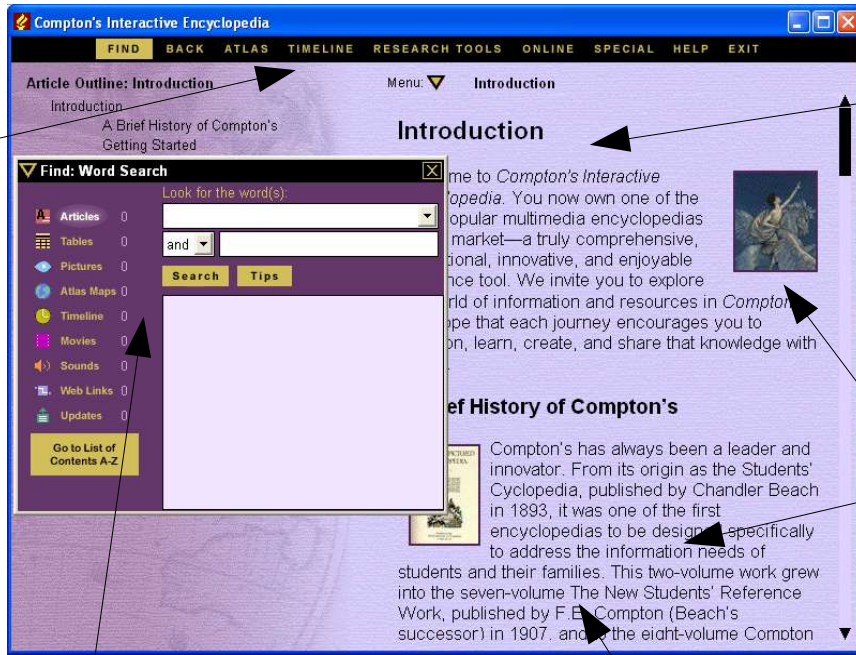


Main article, the text is displayed in a narrow column so that it is easier to read. Links are highlighted in red to stand out.

Fig 1.3 shows the design of this..

Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia 99

The navigation at the top here is described in Fig 1.4. It is consistent on all pages and gives quick links to key areas.



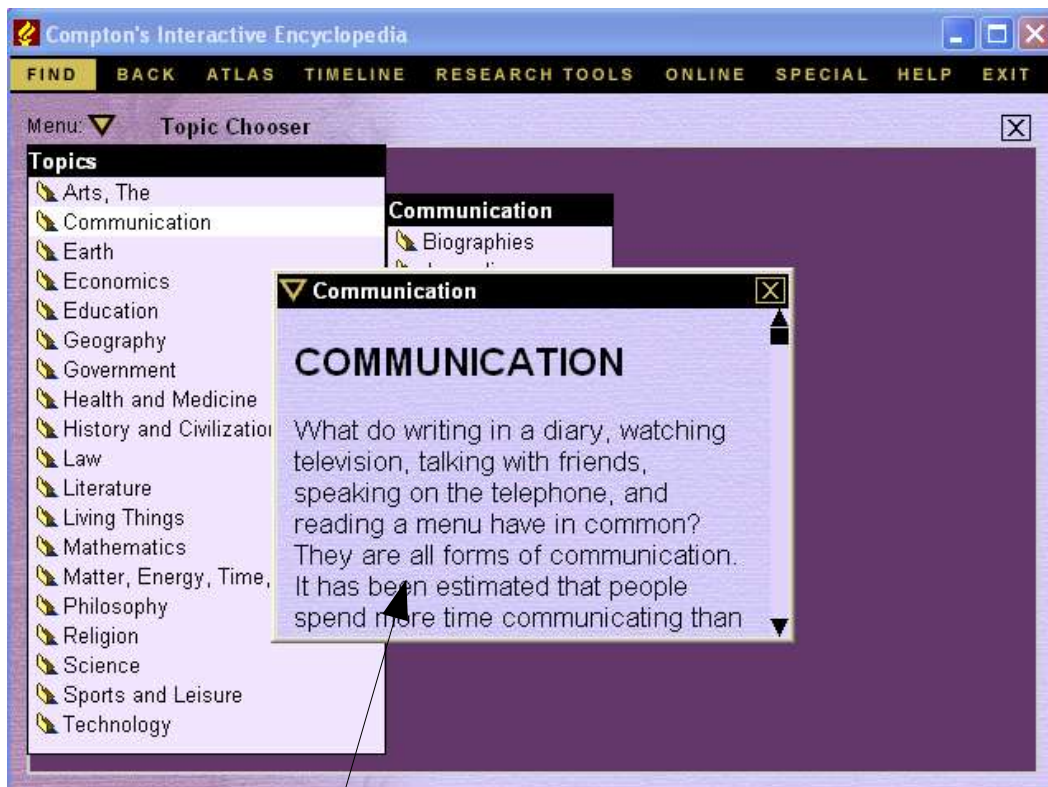
The opening screen is designed the same as all the articles, this helps the user learn the interface quicker. Note how images are used to split up text, this helps make it easier to read.

The find window pops up when you start the program as it assumes you are using the program to find a topic. It can be moved around the screen or closed. It can be reopened using the navigation at the top of the screen

Fig 1.5 shows the design of this.



Main article contents on the right. Pretty standard for all three Encyclopedias.



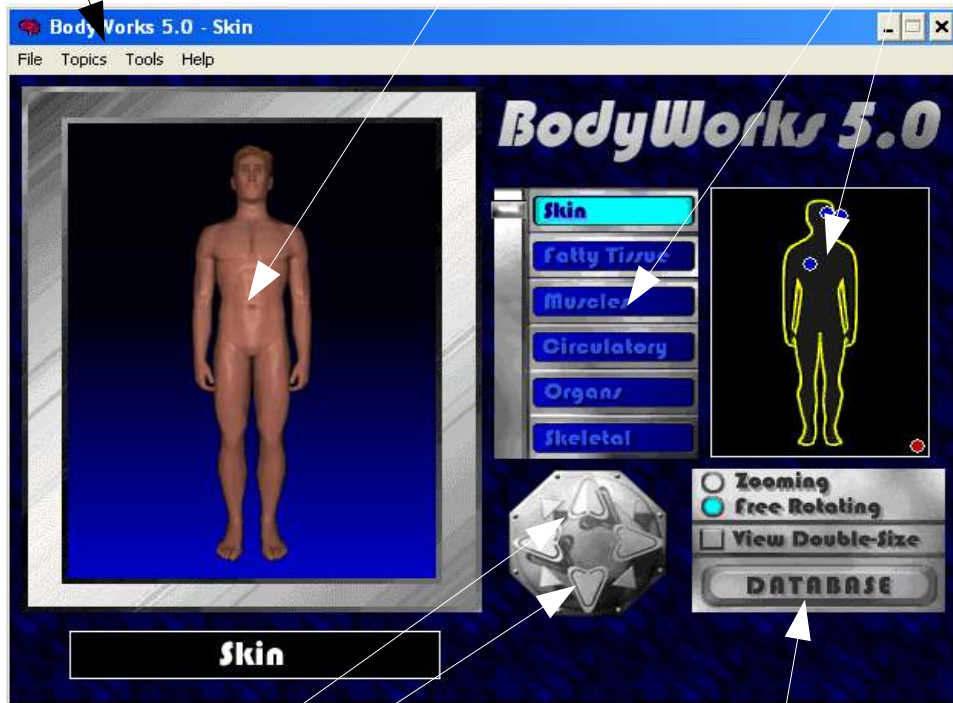
The topic chooser allows you to view specific text. Its almost an extended dictionary in places.

Body Works 5

Menus as shown in Fig 1.6. These are always at the top of the program window.

3D Person, you can see different parts of him depending on what you select.

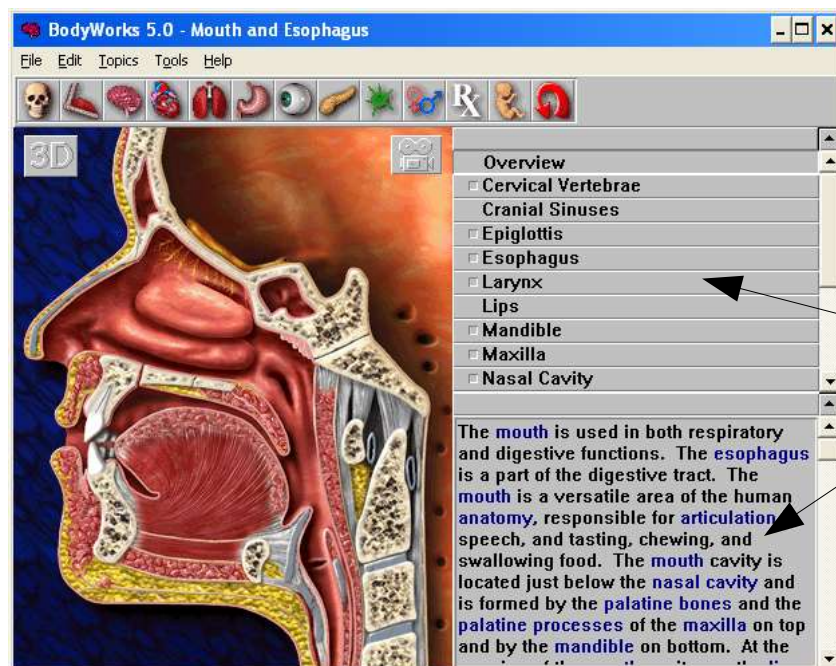
Selection of the parts of the body to look at in more detail and zoom features.



This section allows you to rotate the body in different directions so that you can see a 360degree view of the body. A movement pad image is used to show the different ways the body can move.

Link to the database articles. Body Works is the only program which starts with its main multimedia feature – the 3D human body. Its not immediately clear that to get to the rest of the encyclopedia you need to click on the database button.

Fig 1.7 shows this screen shot in design form.



Here you can see related articles.

Below is text about the topic. The blue words are links to related articles.

2. CD-ROM Content

<i>Encarta 97</i>	<i>Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia 99</i>	<i>Body Works 5</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media Gallery (fig 2.1). • Guided Tours. • Atlas (fig 2.2). • Time lines (fig 2.3). • Mindmaze. • Videos and pictures are used in articles. • Images 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of audio in special features – usually with a slide show along with it. (Fig 2.4). • Atlas. • Time line. • Images • Picture tour – has captions below to explain picture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3D human body showing internal and external views on a range of subjects eg. bones and nervous system. • 3D views of internal organs. (fig 2.7).

Fig 2.1. Encarta media search.

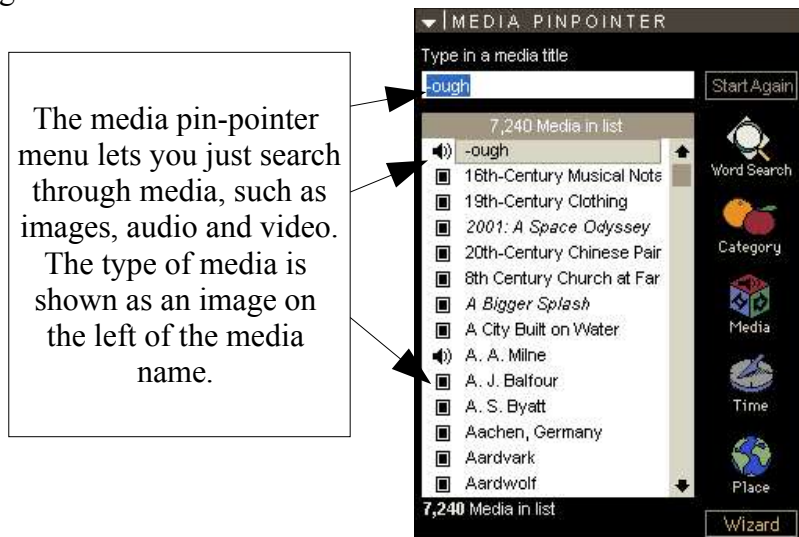
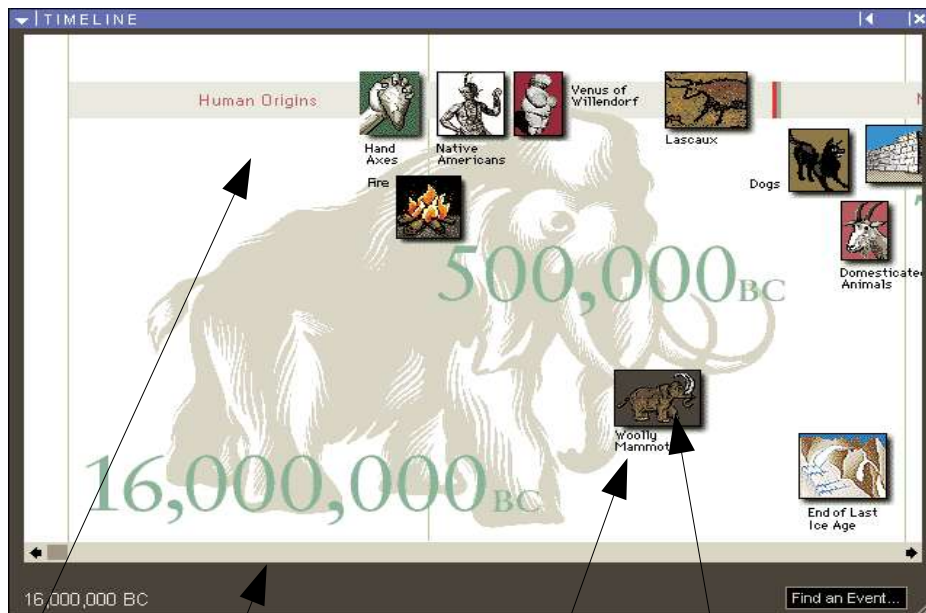


Fig 2.2 Encarta atlas.



The atlas starts with the world and lets you zoom in by clicking on the map. In this case I have clicked on the United Kingdom. By clicking again you could zoom in further or by clicking a city you could get an article regarding that place.

Fig 2.3 Encarta time Line.



The time line allows to the scroll through the ages. Its quite educational as it allows you to note where events happen in time and reference them with other events.

Images are used as long with a title which helps break up the time line and makes it easier to spot certain events.

Fig 2.4 Compton's audio content.

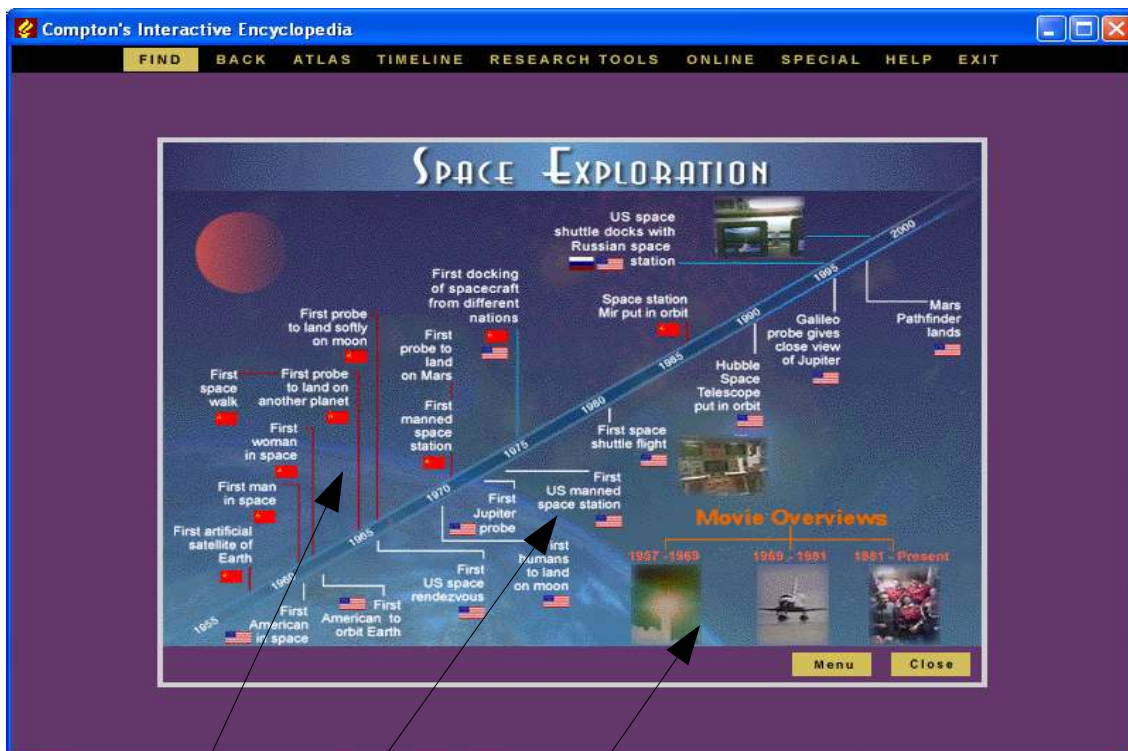
Here there is someone talking about the Roman Empire while a slide show happens. In my opinion its of poor education value because it takes longer than simply reading some text and viewing the images in your own time. It may be good for disabled users.

The controls at the bottom allow you to pause or skip parts of the audio.

Fig 2.5 Compton's time line.

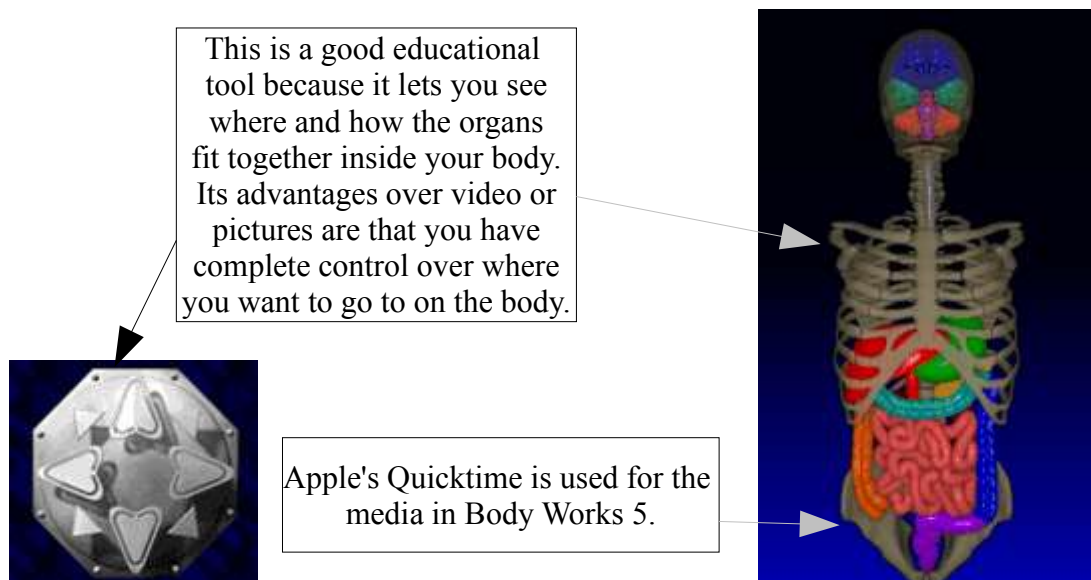
The Compton's time line is split into two sections, World and United States. This in my opinion is of poor education value to a European audience unless specifically studying American culture, this shows Encarta's more worldwide approach in their time line.

Fig 2.6 Compton's space media.



Here Compton's has used a time line to represent their Space feature. Its of good educational value how it is split into the different nations involved in space exploration with added videos in the bottom right.

Fig 2.7 Body Works 5 3D body.



This is a good educational tool because it lets you see where and how the organs fit together inside your body. Its advantages over video or pictures are that you have complete control over where you want to go to on the body.

Apple's Quicktime is used for the media in Body Works 5.

Encarta tends to include media in articles as well as in special features. Compton's on the other hand has set topics which then contain multimedia, such as ancient civilizations or space exploration (fig 2.6). The Body Works program revolves around their 3D body views which is a different approach to the others. I think this approach is the best because the text is extra material for the multimedia rather than the multimedia feature being a sometimes pointless add-on for the text.